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From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

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Subject: Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on education and training of youth workers

Delegations will find attached the conclusions on education and training of youth workers, as adopted by the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council (EYCS) on 21-22 November 2019.

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on
Education and training of youth workers

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

RECOGNISING THAT:

1. The Council Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 invites the Member States and the European Commission *inter alia* to support the development of quality youth work at local, regional, national and European level, including training for youth workers.
2. The variety and specific features of youth work in the Member States are a reflection of the Member States' respective histories, socio-economic conditions and cultural contexts, as well as their national, regional and local priorities.
3. Despite the differences, there is common ground as regards the educational and training needs of youth workers, based on long-standing cooperation in the European youth field, on shared values and a large number of studies, declarations, programmes, conclusions and recommendations on youth work¹. Activities aiming *inter alia* at providing a European classification of occupational standards, mapping the educational and career paths of youth workers, increasing the quality of youth work provision, providing information on youth work and supporting the professional development of youth workers through the EU programmes and the Council of Europe's Youth Work portfolio bring useful elements to this common ground.

¹ See references in the Annex

4. The education and training of youth workers should be adapted to meet the particular needs and conditions in individual Member States. Accordingly, the education and training of youth workers requires a flexible, user-driven, multi-level and cross-sectorial approach.
5. The education and training of youth workers can be carried out by, inter alia, youth organisations, youth work organisations, municipal or regional youth work and other civil society organisations, as well as by education and training institutions which provide youth work-related studies.
6. Since the education and training of youth workers need to be adapted to national conditions, the resulting models and practices are not necessarily directly transferable to other Member States.
7. Recent studies and surveys² suggest that there is a shortage of quality education in the field of youth work and a shortage of training for youth workers in Europe. There is also a lack of information and data about the educational and training needs and about the existing provision in the various Member States.
8. High-quality, flexible and practice-oriented education and training for youth workers, supported by regular research, is a crucial precondition and a driver for promoting both the quality and the recognition of youth work.

EMPHASISING:

9. The need to develop and deliver quality education and training for youth workers, building on the diversity of youth work in Europe.

² See reference 4 in the Annex.

10. The need to further explore the educational and learning pathways of paid and voluntary youth workers. There is a lack of knowledge on how formal education and non-formal learning connects with and prepares youth workers for the actual practice of youth work. There is also a need to map the career paths of youth workers and provide a deeper insight into the management of youth organisations, youth work organisations and municipal or regional youth work in order to support on-the-job learning and training. Further information is also needed on how associations and networks of youth workers can be empowered and strengthened for peer learning, peer counselling and peer support.
11. The essential role of research, practice-based and bottom-up perspectives and approaches to the education and training of youth workers.
12. The importance and potential of peer learning, peer coaching, mentoring and supervised and reflective practice in the education and training of youth workers.
13. The recognition of the variety of competences³ that youth workers need for working with young people as their life situations evolve.
14. The importance of initial and continuous youth worker education and training to meet and adequately address emerging issues that are relevant to young people, such as digitalisation, migration, climate change, a changing labour market, threats to democracy and human rights, and increased uncertainty.
15. The opportunity to consider youth worker education and training as a tool for the implementation of European youth policy objectives and youth work strategies, in particular the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027.
16. The importance of setting up or enhancing, as appropriate, sustainable structures and resources for the development of the education and training of youth workers in Europe.

³ Youth work (education) in flux: contemporary challenges in an erratic Europe, Report on the EU youth conference, Helsinki, 1-3 July 2019 by Tomi Kiilakoski & Marko Kovacic

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS, WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

17. Building on existing mapping exercise, carry out further research on current youth worker education and training systems in Europe, in order to deepen the knowledge on the impact of the policies, methods and tools developed at European level on education and training of youth workers in the Member States. Wherever possible, the information gathering should be carried out through the available instruments, such as the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy and Youth Wiki.
18. Develop a shared understanding between Member States of quality youth worker education and training and their objectives, fostering the development of flexible, practice-based and multi-level approaches for the education and training of youth workers that can be adapted to meet national, regional and local needs and expectations in each Member State.
19. Create a competence-based framework for formal and non-formal youth work education and training which is sensitive to the differences in training needs of employed/paid youth workers, those wishing to pursue a career in youth work and volunteer youth workers and youth leaders, which relies on peer-learning and uses digital learning and other innovative methods. Such a framework does not impose any formal requirements on national education programmes and will fully respect national competences.
20. Encourage Member States to carry out, where appropriate, a country-specific mapping of the competences needed in youth work, as well as of their key elements, and accordingly to evaluate, update and further develop youth worker training and education programmes run by local, regional or national level educational or training institutes, or by organisations providing youth work training, for both initial and continuous learning.

21. Encourage the Member States, the European Commission and relevant national institutions and stakeholders in the youth field to work together with the Council of Europe, youth organisations and other relevant organisations and networks in further developing the education and training of youth workers at European level.
22. Promote and facilitate bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in particular at interdisciplinary level, between public administrations in the Member States, universities, educational institutions, including vocational education institutions and organisations with established education and training programmes for youth workers and those seeking to develop such programmes.
23. Promote continuous cooperation between public youth work providers and civil society organisations engaged in youth worker education and training for the purpose of exchanging experiences and sharing inspiration across Europe. To that end, the opportunities provided by relevant EU programmes, such as Erasmus+, should be made use of, as appropriate.
24. Enhance the education and training of youth workers, youth work related research and the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work by providing opportunities for exchange, cooperation and networking through effective use of the opportunities provided by EU programmes and funds, such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, the European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and Creative Europe.

INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO

25. Explore the options, by the end of 2021, for further developing the education and training of youth workers, including the preparation of a Council Recommendation on this topic.
26. Improve digital competences through non-formal learning and training, taking into account the process of updating the existing Digital Education Action Plan in view of extending it to youth work.

1. References

In adopting these conclusions, the Council recalls in particular the following:

1. Council Conclusions on access of young people to culture (2010/C 326/02);
2. Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on youth work (2010/C 327/01);
3. Council Conclusions on the eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility (2011/C 372/03);
4. European Commission, Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union, 2014;
5. Council Conclusions on reinforcing youth work to ensure cohesive societies (2015/C 170/02);
6. Council Resolution on encouraging political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe, (2015/C 417/02);
7. Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention, 27-30 April 2015;
8. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the role of the youth sector in an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to preventing and combating violent radicalization of young people (2016/C 213/01);
9. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on promoting new approaches in youth work to uncover and develop the potential of young people (2016/C 467/03);
10. Council Conclusions on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development of essential life skills that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life (2017/C 189/06);
11. Council conclusions on smart youth work (2017/C 418/02);

12. Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2017) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on youth work;
13. Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European Cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2018/C 456/01);
14. Communication from the Commission on the Digital Education Action Plan, COM(2018) 22 final;
15. Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth: Mapping the educational and career paths of youth workers, Part I. Report.

2. Definition

For the purpose of these Council Conclusions,

‘Youth worker’ is a professional, volunteer or youth leader who facilitates young people’s learning, personal and social development and motivates and supports them in becoming autonomous, active and responsible individuals and citizens. The delivery of youth work is underpinned by the principles of voluntary and active participation of young people.